

V. REMARKS

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because the Amendment: a) places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; b) does not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration because the Amendment amplifies issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; and c) places the application in better form for appeal, should an Appeal be necessary. The Amendment is necessary and was not earlier presented because it is made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. The amendments to the subject claims do not incorporate any new subject matter into the claims. Thus, entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 USC 102 (b) as being anticipated by Ozaki et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0031658). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Ozaki discloses a game machine that has a back side display unit composed of reels for displaying back patterns and a front side display unit composed of transparent EL panels for displaying overlapping patterns overlapping with the back patterns. The back side display unit and the front side display unit are disposed not to produce blind spot regions of the back patterns. The game machine provides various overlapping patterns with good visibility and a high game selection capability to a player.

Claim 3, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine that includes a plurality of symbol strips each having a plurality of symbols, a plurality of annular bodies to which each of the symbol strips are annularly attached, an LCD panel provided in front of the plurality of annular bodies and configured to electronically display an image concerning a game and a light source configured to illuminate the symbols from a slanting direction of a front of the symbols. Also, claim 3 recites that the plurality of annular bodies are formed to reflect light from the light source in a direction of the LCD panel. Furthermore, claim 3 recites that each annular body includes a rim assembly and a ring part with the rim assembly having a radially-extending boss having a hole formed therethrough disposed centrally about an axis of rotation, a circular rim piece disposed radially apart from the boss and centrally

encircling the axis of rotation at a first radial distance therefrom and a plurality of arms disposed angularly apart from one another and extending radially between and interconnecting the boss and the rim piece and the ring part has a circular configuration and centrally encircles the axis of rotation at a second radial distance being at least approximately equal to the first radial distance. Also, claim 3 recites that each symbol strip is fabricated from a stiff yet pliable material such that the symbol strip interconnects the rim piece and the ring part in an axially-disposed apart manner when opposing outer side edges of the symbol strip are attached to and between the rim piece and the ring part, the ring part forming an unobstructed circular opening into an empty cylindrical cavity defined by the rim assembly, the ring part and the symbol strip when interconnected together.

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection is improper because the applied art fails to teach each and every element of claim 3 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art fails to teach each annular body includes a rim assembly and a ring part with the rim assembly having a radially-extending boss having a hole formed therethrough disposed centrally about an axis of rotation, a circular rim piece disposed radially apart from the boss and centrally encircling the axis of rotation at a first radial distance therefrom and a plurality of arms disposed angularly apart from one another and extending radially between and interconnecting the boss and the rim piece and the ring part has a circular configuration and centrally encircles the axis of rotation at a second radial distance being at least approximately equal to the first radial distance. Also, the applied art fails to teach that each symbol strip is fabricated from a stiff yet pliable material such that the symbol strip interconnects the rim piece and the ring part in an axially-disposed apart manner when opposing outer side edges of the symbol strip are attached to and between the rim piece and the ring part, the ring part forming an unobstructed circular opening into an empty cylindrical cavity defined by the rim assembly, the ring part and the symbol strip when interconnected together. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 3 is allowable over the applied art.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12-17 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Inoue (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0038726) in view of Ozaki et al. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Inoue discloses a symbol display apparatus for game machine that includes a lined-up plurality of reel units. Each reel unit has double reel structure composed of an outer reel and an inner reel. Inside the inner reel, backlights are disposed. Peripheries of the outer and inner reels are so colored lightly as to be semitransparent so the outer and inner reels make an object disposed inside indistinct but transmit light. Inner symbols arranged on the periphery of the inner reel are printed with light color. When the inner and outer symbols are overlapped, the backlight emits white light. Color of the inner symbol illuminated with the white light does not affect adversely to appearance of the outer symbol. When the inner symbol is displayed through a transparent portion provided in the outer reel, the backlight emits light color of which is correspondent to the inner symbol for displaying the inner symbol emphatically and clearly.

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine that includes a plurality of symbol strips each having a plurality of symbols, a plurality of annular bodies to which each of the symbol strips are annularly attached, an LCD panel provided in front of the plurality of annular bodies and configured to electronically display an image concerning a game and at least one light source configured to illuminate the symbols from behind the symbols. Claim 1 also recites that the plurality of annular bodies are made transparent or semitransparent for transmitting light from the at least one light source in a direction of the image display. Additionally, claim 1 recites that each annular body includes a rim assembly and a ring part with the rim assembly having a radially-extending boss having a hole formed therethrough disposed centrally about an axis of rotation, a circular rim piece disposed radially apart from the boss and centrally encircling the axis of rotation at a first radial distance therefrom and a plurality of arms disposed angularly apart from one another and extending radially between and interconnecting the boss and the rim piece and

the ring part has a circular configuration and centrally encircles the axis of rotation at a second radial distance being at least approximately equal to the first radial distance. Also, claim 3 recites that each symbol strip is fabricated from a stiff yet pliable material such that the symbol strip interconnects the rim piece and the ring part in an axially-disposed apart manner when opposing outer side edges of the symbol strip are attached to and between the rim piece and the ring part, the ring part forming an unobstructed circular opening into an empty cylindrical cavity defined by the rim assembly, the ring part and the symbol strip when interconnected together.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of claim 1 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest that each annular body includes a rim assembly and a ring part with the rim assembly having a radially-extending boss having a hole formed therethrough disposed centrally about an axis of rotation, a circular rim piece disposed radially apart from the boss and centrally encircling the axis of rotation at a first radial distance therefrom and a plurality of arms disposed angularly apart from one another and extending radially between and interconnecting the boss and the rim piece and the ring part has a circular configuration and centrally encircles the axis of rotation at a second radial distance being at least approximately equal to the first radial distance. Also, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art fails to teach that each symbol strip is fabricated from a stiff yet pliable material such that the symbol strip interconnects the rim piece and the ring part in an axially-disposed apart manner when opposing outer side edges of the symbol strip are attached to and between the rim piece and the ring part, the ring part forming an unobstructed circular opening into an empty cylindrical cavity defined by the rim assembly, the ring part and the symbol strip when interconnected together. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the applied art.

Claims 7, 8, 9 and 12 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Claims 14 and 16 depend from claim 3 and include all of the features of claim 3. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 3 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Claims 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 15 and 17 are canceled and, as a result, the rejection as applied thereto is now moot.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance over the prior art of record. Therefore, this Amendment is believed to be a complete response to the outstanding Office Action. Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to set forth further arguments and remarks supporting the patentability of their claims, including the separate patentability of the dependent claims not explicitly addressed herein, in future papers.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

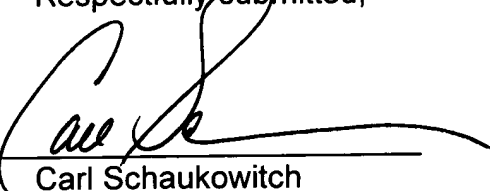
Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same,

the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 30, 2007

By:


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Enclosure(s): Amendment Transmittal

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